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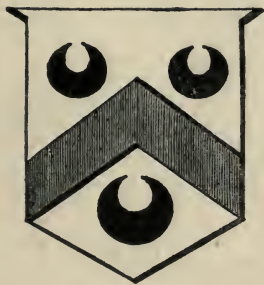




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A  
**SINGLE SI QUIS.**

BY  
**GEORGE WITHER.**



**PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCXLVIII.**

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE original of this little Tract is in quarto, and of rare occurrence. It was written in consequence of the neglect which one of the Author's Petitions met with from the Puritan Parliament. Wither states his losses in the Civil Wars to have been great; such assertions must, however, be received with suspicion, not being corroborated by facts on record. When first seized with the rebellious fever, he was merely leaseholder of a Farm at *Wanborough*, near Farnham, in *Surrey*; not having, (as he admits in his "*Justiciarius Justificatus*," ) any land of his own. The loss he sustained, was a portion of the Stock of this Farm; and according to the evidence of his neighbours, before a committee for the county of *Surrey*, it did not exceed *Three Hundred Pounds*; having sold great part of the property, and received money for it, prior to his house being entered by the Royalists. There is likewise a discrepancy in his own version of the affair; the first edition of "*Campo Musæ*," in 1643, states the sum to be One Thousand; and subsequent editions, Two Thousand Pounds. Be this as it may, he represents himself, after this loss, to be worth nothing:

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" Foes  
 " Of all I had have quite despoiled me."

The following computation will shew, that Wither quickly contrived, *ex nihil*, to finger the property of others, to the tune, altogether, of more than Ten Thousand Pounds.


Without reckoning upwards of £.2000, ordered to be paid him at different times previous to 1648; or £.1300, the amount of his joint purchase of two Manors in Hampshire; and also omitting his profits out of the *ad valorem* allowance made by Parliament, in 1649; to Colonel Humphreys, George Wither, and seven others; as *Trustees*, appointed to ferret out—secure—value—and sell—the jewels, wearing apparel, and other effects, of the unfortunate King Charles and his family; Wither's account of loss and gain, during the Usurpation, is shown (in round numbers) at the ensuing page.

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# PREFACE.

LOSS.	£.	GAIN.	£.
Stock from the Farm at <i>Wanborough</i> ; as stated in Wither's first edition of " <i>Campo Musæ</i> ."	1000	By plunder of Royalists, in 1643; as admitted by Wither in his "Petition and Narrative," 1658-9 .....	200
Money said to have been borrowed for the service of the State. [vide Commons' Journals, 1650-1, and the Petition printed with his "Epistle at Random", 1659.] .....	700	The Manor of <i>Bently</i> , with the Farm called Berry Court. All the Borough and Privileges of <i>Gosport</i> , in the parish of <i>Alverstoke</i> , with the gift of the Parsonage; the Mills; the Royalties, &c. bought by Wither and his Wife in 1648. [Vide the Will of Elizabeth Wither.]	1100
		Hantden ( <i>Hambledon</i> ) Manor bought by Wither, 1650-1. [Vide Gale's Hist. of Winchester Cathedral.] .....	3700
		Grant by Parliament in 1650-1 out of Denham's Estate, [ <i>Horksley Hall</i> in Essex] and accepted by Wither in lieu of £.2200, of his claim on the State. [Vide Commons' Journals, 1650-1, and "Petition and Narrative," 1658-9] .....	2200
		Residue of the said Estate, bought by Wither at the same time. ....	1600
		Cash received by Privy Seal out of the Exchequer, in 1656. ....	300
TOTAL ....	<u>£.1700</u>	TOTAL ....	<u>£.9100</u>

The above statement renders the truth of Wither's eternal complaints of poverty, during the Commonwealth, somewhat more than questionable. His Bishop's lands (sold by the Puritans for £.4800) remained in his possession, from the years 1648, and 1651, to the Restoration in 1660; and no allusion whatever is made to their value, until the just claim of the rightful Owner compels him to anticipate the loss of them; then, by way of making out a strong case of distress, he confesses, (in his "*Fides Anglicana*") that he is "in danger to lose totally between five and six hundred pounds *per annum*, in Prelates' Lands." Wither was a strange compound of religion and roguery. Like his fellow Saints, or Dissenters, (the words are synonymous,) his pious zeal consisted in attacking the Church; talking much of the Lord; and thinking more of Himself.



*A Single SI QUIS and a Quadruple  
QUERE, with the Occasions of them,  
presented to the Members of the honor-  
able House of Commons, touching a  
Petition, with certain Verses annexed,  
and lately laid at their feet in the said  
House of Commons, by Major G. W.*

---

THE SI QUIS, AND THE OCCASION OF IT.

THAT day,\*<sup>1</sup> in which victorious *Cromwell* sent  
His first express, (to your great wonderment)  
Of *Hamilton's* defeat; which, whilst a *Scot*  
Shall be remember'd, will not be forgot;  
Ev'n on that day, before your feet I spread,  
A sad petition, humbly prefaced,  
By these ensuing lines;

'He that is prostrate on the floor,  
Lies there, whence he can fall no lower:  
So does this Orator of your.

'Petitions, he, hath oft' convey'd  
Into your hands, yet finds no aid;  
These, therefore, at your feet are laid,

---

\*<sup>1</sup> *Wednesday, August 23rd, 1648.*—'This day came a full relation to the House under Lt. Gen. Cromwell's owne hands, of the great victory against the Scots.'

A SINGLE SI QUIS.

- ' Where, let them not neglected lie,  
Nor, unregarded, throw them by,  
But view them with a gracious eye,
- ' And let our parents not provoke  
Their children, till offence be took,  
By which, their patience may be broke.
- ' Consider those who lie below ;  
For you shall reap what you do sow ;  
And find such mercy, as you show.
- ' Refresh their spirits, who are sad,  
As God, this day, hath made you glad,  
By those good tidings you have had.
- ' Among the rest, this *Beadsman* here,  
That feels the wants, which they but fear,  
Who dread th' effects of this moist year.
- ' And blame him not, that thus he shows  
His cause, as well in verse as prose,  
And in a path untrodden goes.
- ' For scarce earth, water, air, or fire  
Enjoys he; or, wherewith to hire,  
That pittance\*<sup>2</sup> nature doth require.

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\*<sup>2</sup> In July, 1648, [just prior to this doleful tale,] Wither was joint purchaser, with *Thomas Allen*, of the Manor of North Waltham, in Hampshire, for £.964; and shortly after [Sept. 1648] we find him coupled with *Nicholas Love*, as buyer of the Manor of Itchinswell in the same county for £.1756. Both these worthies appear to have been notorious characters; the name of *Thomas Allen* occurs amongst those who tried the Royalist Peers, and that of *Nicholas Love* will be found in the list of Regicides, 1648-9, but more particularly noticed in the Act of Attainder, [xii. Charles II.] as one of the "wicked and active instruments in the murder of the King."—He made a timely escape out of England; to avoid the unpleasant operation of losing his head.

The Poet's uncle, *John Wither*, of Manydown Farm, near Wootton St. Lawrence, married *Joane Love*, of Basing, Hants.



A SINGLE SI QUIS.

‘ And, men in danger to be drown’d,  
Lay hold on any trifle found,  
To re-convey them safe aground.

‘ But his annexed paper view,  
And let him favor’d be of you,  
As that which it avers, is true.

‘ And, if for that, which he prefers  
His suit, there stand Competitors,  
Let it be neither his, nor theirs,  
But, as most equitable, it appears.’

These (to my prayer fixed) for your view,  
I left upon the pavement, and withdrew;  
In hope some kind hand, would have been  
extended

To raise it, that my cause might be commended  
To free debate. But, six days now are gone,  
And, God, since then, the favor late bestown  
Doubles and triples upon you; yet, I  
Still at your door, unheard, unheeded, lie;  
And find not so much as a friend, by whom  
To learn, what of those Papers is become.  
Of private searches, therefore, being weary,  
I set up now, a Si Quis,\*<sup>3</sup> and a Quere,  
And, thus, it follows here: ‘ IF ANY MAN,  
‘ Who sits, within your walls, instruct me can,  
‘ How I may know, what hand convey’d away  
‘ My Prayer from your sight, upon the day

---

\*<sup>3</sup> *Si Quis*,—An obsolete term for a hand bill, usually commencing—“ Si quis invenerit,” &c.

A SINGLE SI QUIS.

‘ Of your glad tidings: or, if he that seiz’d  
‘ Those humbled papers, will be nobly pleas’d  
‘ So to produce them, that I may obtain  
‘ Due remedy, for what they do complain;  
‘ It shall beget a servant, who will strive  
‘ To merit those occasions it may give  
‘ Of that obligation: and, for his reward,  
‘ Shall gain him prayers too; which will be  
    heard  
‘ For him, and his, perchance, when feel they  
    may,  
‘ What ’tis to be neglected, when we pray.’

But whatsoe’re effect vouchsafed be;  
God bless the King,\* the Parliament and Me.

---

THE QUADRUPLE QUERE, AND THE OCCASION  
OF IT.

Your House receiving notice, twelve months  
    since,  
Of my long-sufferings, and known indigence,  
(Occasion’d by your service,) thought it fit,  
To some selected Members, to commit

---

\**King Charles the First*, at this period, it was thought, might be reconciled to the Puritans.—So [with Wither] it was “God bless the King” and Parliament.—Afterwards he dedicated hymns of thanksgiving, for the anniversary of the Monarch’s death, to *John Bradshaw*; [aptly termed the “devil’s masterpiece”] and, at the restoration of Charles the Second, solemnly vowed he never intended aught against the “*person or dignity*” of the murdered King! although

———— “God’s Justice,  
“Power, and Mercy, all were manifest,  
“When of his throne the King he dispossess,  
“And took away both *Crown and Life*.”

*Wither’s “British Appeals,” p. 22.*

The finding an employment, to supply  
 Subsistence, till my great necessity  
 Might be removed, by discharging, that  
 Which is yet owing to me, by the State: \*<sup>5</sup>  
 And, having long, without success attended,  
 I now, at last, by them, am recommended  
 To serve as one of those *Commissioners*, †<sup>6</sup>  
 By whom, supreme authority confers  
*Wine Licenses*. Wherein, since, there appears,  
 With me, nor few, nor mean Competitors;  
 And that the place, hath been aspersed by  
 Some, lately, as a *Grand Monopoly*,  
 I humbly make these Queries.

‘ FIRST, whether he, that hath suspected been,  
 ‘ To hate that Cause, which you engage us in,

---

\*<sup>5</sup> *The State*, on the 9th of February, 1642-3, permitted Captain Wither to plunder the Royalists *ad libitum*; which he turned to such good account, that his gain is said to have “far exceeded his loss.”—Although very minute on most points connected with himself; Wither does not favour his readers with the details of this burglarious *carte blanche*; but merely says, after being called to account by Parliament, that he got £.200 “or thereabout.”

†<sup>6</sup> These *Commissioners* were created by letters patent under the Great Seal; and the power vested in them was that of *granting Licenses* [according to certain pecuniary regulations] for selling Wines by *retail*.—King Charles the Second, on his restoration, appointed a new set of Commissioners by Act of Parliament; which induced several persons to petition for a confirmation of the previous appointments made by his father, or to be allowed some remuneration for their loss. The Petitioners stated, that the “Usurping Powers *did not annul their letters patent* ;” that some of the old Commissioners had compounded with the Commonwealth for the same; that during the disorders “*all, who would, sold wine without license* ;” and that “*no grants had been made since the year 1643*.”

According to this account, neither Wither or his Competitors were made Commissioners; and the “*Grand Monopoly*” was not officially, [although virtually] abolished by the Puritans.

A SINGLE SI QUIS.

‘ Standing Competitor with him that’s known  
‘ To hazard for it, more than all his own ;  
‘ Can be prefer’d, without a wrong, to you,  
‘ And an encroachment, on the others due ?

‘ NEXT whether, a Competitor defam’d  
‘ For breach of trust, (by whomsoever nam’d,)  
‘ Ought rather, by your votes, to be befriended,  
‘ Than he, that to your House is recommended  
‘ By your own Members ? and, ’gainst whom,  
no man  
‘ Exhibit, justly, an Impeachment can.

‘ THEN, whether, he your grace deserveth  
best,  
‘ Who hath for you, lost all his interest,  
‘ In outward things ? or they, whose wealth is  
more  
‘ Since these Distractions, then it was before ?

‘ AND LASTLY whether ought may be compriz’d  
‘ Among things, judg’d, to be Monopoliz’d,  
‘ When all the profits, which from thence arise,  
‘ Are brought into the public Treasuries ?  
‘ And, whereof, neither one alone, nor few,  
‘ But ev’ry man receives his proper due.’

Consider, I beseech you, but of these  
Few Queries, and then do as you shall please :  
For, though my hopes in these poor suits may  
fail,

Yet, in my noblest aim, I shall prevail.  
Yea, ere this land hath rest, a day will be,  
In which there shall be some regard of me ;  
And, wherein, that which is perus’d with jeers,  
Shall fill their scornful readers full of fears.

FIAT VOLUNTAS DEI.

G. WITHER.











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